



Westtown Design Guidelines

October 2003



Planning and Design Institute, Inc
James Piwoni , AIA

Westown Design Guidelines

October 2003

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 1

Background	1
How To Use These Guidelines?	2
Street Types	4
Zones	8
Resources	10

GUIDELINES 11

General Guidelines

Reinforcing Places	13
Vehicular Access	14
Build-to-Lines and Setbacks	16
Composition - Height	18
Composition - Base, Middle, Top	20
Composition - Proportion	20
Composition - Scale	21

Zone Specific Guidelines

Zone One - Base

Base of Building Definition	22
Base Height	23
Entrance Location	25
Entrance Expression	25
Entrance Frequency	26
Entrance Frequency - Transitions	28
Transparency	30
Detailing Enrichments	32
Surface Treatment	33
Finish Materials	34
Landscaping and Screening	36
Signage	38
Hoods, Canopies, and Awnings	40
Lighting	41

Zone Two -Middle

Mid-Section of Building Definition	42
Surface Variation - Rhythm of Vertical Expression	43
Surface Variation - Surface Relief	44
Surface Variation - Solid and Void Patterns	46
Surface Variation - Corners	47
Finish Materials	48
Signage	50
Lighting	52

Zone Three - Top

Top of Building Definition	53
Roofline - Meeting the Sky	54
Skyline Profile - Crowning	55
Mechanical Equipment	56
Lighting	57
Finish Materials	58
Signage	60

Zone Four - Facade Base Encroachments

Architectural Elements	61
Hoods, Canopies, and Awnings	62
Signage	62
Lighting	63
Areaways	63
Street Furnishings	63

Zone Five - Facade Middle and Top Encroachments

Architectural Elements	64
Signage	65
Balconies and Bay Windows	65
Sun Control Devices	66
Lighting	66

Zone Six - Interior Activities

Street Activation - Use	67
Street Activation - Public Views	68
Street Activation - Interior Lighting	69

GLOSSARY 70

BACKGROUND

The Westown Association, Business Improvement District #5 promotes development of the western portion of Milwaukee's Central Business District as a vibrant commercial area and as an exciting place to live, learn, work, and play through collaborative efforts that involve area businesses, public and private institutions, property owners and residents.

Westown envisions a vibrant, diverse, clean, safe, premier destination with increased economic vitality. The organization is working toward this vision through leadership and involvement in broad-based collaborative efforts. A diverse range of over one hundred Westown members are actively involved in leading marketing, special events, community-economic development initiatives, transportation and parking planning with the shared goal of making Westown a great place to be.

The Community-Economic Development Committee, a subcommittee of the Westown Association Board began working on the development of design guidelines in spring, 2000. The committee's original goal was to over time, improve the exterior of properties within Westown. This goal remains. In addition, the group hopes to set a high standard for design while guiding businesses, property owners and developers as they make improvements or develop new buildings in Westown. Ultimately, Westown envisions a district that with increased property values, lively streets and a thriving business community. New development and any facade or site work on properties in Westown should contribute to the public's use, safety and enjoyment of Westown.

At the beginning of 2002, Westown Economic Development Committee approached the City with a request for partnership to rewrite, illustrate and format their draft guidelines that would advise and di-

rect future physical development and redevelopment in the western portion of downtown. In March 2002, Westown and the City of Milwaukee Redevelopment Authority entered into a Cooperation Agreement for the preparation of the Westown Guidelines.

Once the City and Westown determined the scope of work to be completed, methods to be used, products to result, and likely costs, they began a process to solicit and retain consultants qualified to complete the preparation of the guidelines. In August 2002, Planning and Design Institute in partnership with Jim Piwoni, President of the Historic Third Ward Architectural Review Board were chosen to join the City and Westown in the creation of illustrated design guidelines.

The City, Westown and consultant team defined the following guideline objectives:

- A project's site design and massing respond to the larger context of Westown, Milwaukee's downtown and the region
- The building's architectural expression relates to the neighborhood context
- The building's street facade creates a safe, inviting and interactive pedestrian environment
- The project's public amenities enhance the streetscape and open space system and add value to surrounding properties
- Vehicular access and parking needs for the project are effectively addressed while their impacts on the urban form and pedestrian environment are minimized

By May 2003, the first set of draft guidelines were available for review. City staff, Westtown board and committee members, and various investors and developers reviewed the guidelines and gave comments. Revisions to each draft incorporated these suggestions before a final document was produced for mass distribution.

It is the hope and intent of the City and Westtown Association that these guidelines will be used to promote best development practices for new construction as well as redevelopment.

HOW TO USE THE GUIDELINES

How Will These Guidelines Be Used? Who Do I Need to Talk To?

The Westtown Design Guidelines, created by the City and Westtown Association, are advisory in nature to be used by business owners, architects and developers when designing new construction and/or redevelopment of a structure. The principles contained in this document represent the desired physical form for downtown development west of the river. In addition to the zoning code requirements, these guidelines may be used to determine approval or denial of building permits. Therefore, it is recommended that the developer review the guidelines and have a conversation with the Westtown Association PRIOR to drafting site plans and/or building designs.

How Do I Navigate Through the Guidelines?

Westtown is a unique area within Downtown Milwaukee containing various building styles built over decades. Because all places in Westtown do not share the same character, they should not be designed in the same manner. There is no one-size-fits-all design formula. therefore, the Guidelines are organized into

the following three concepts:

- 1 Street Type
- 2 General Guidelines
- 3 Zones of a Building Facade

Streets within Westtown vary in degrees of pedestrian activity (shopping, dining, use of the sidewalk). The guidelines are specific to the differing “**Street Types**” -- Shopping, Mixed Use, and Service Streets. The Street Type on which the proposed project is located must be determined first as it affects the specific guidelines that apply.

Next, the guidelines contain a section called “**General Guidelines**” which describe concepts of how all buildings should relate to their surroundings. This section applies mainly to new construction but should be reviewed for all proposed projects and improvements to ensure familiarity of the guidelines related to vehicle access and pedestrian circulation.

Finally, because development and improvement projects within Westtown vary significantly in scope from constructing a new sign and storefront modifi-

cations to constructing an entire building, the Guidelines are organized by **“Zones of a Building Facade”**. By organizing the guidelines into zones, applicants who are considering improving a storefront, for example, can find all of the guidelines in one section (Zone 1). However, applicants who are considering the construction of an entire building, which is a much more complex project, would need to be familiar with the guidelines in all Zones (Zones 1-6).

Below is a Useful Checklist to Follow When Using the Design Guidelines:

- 1 Determine the Street Type on which your project is located (pages 4-7).
- 2 Determine which Zones of the Building Facade your project falls into (pages 8-9).
- 3 Review the General Guidelines that pertain to all projects (pages 13-21).
- 4 Flip to the Zones of interest and review the Zone Specific Guidelines.

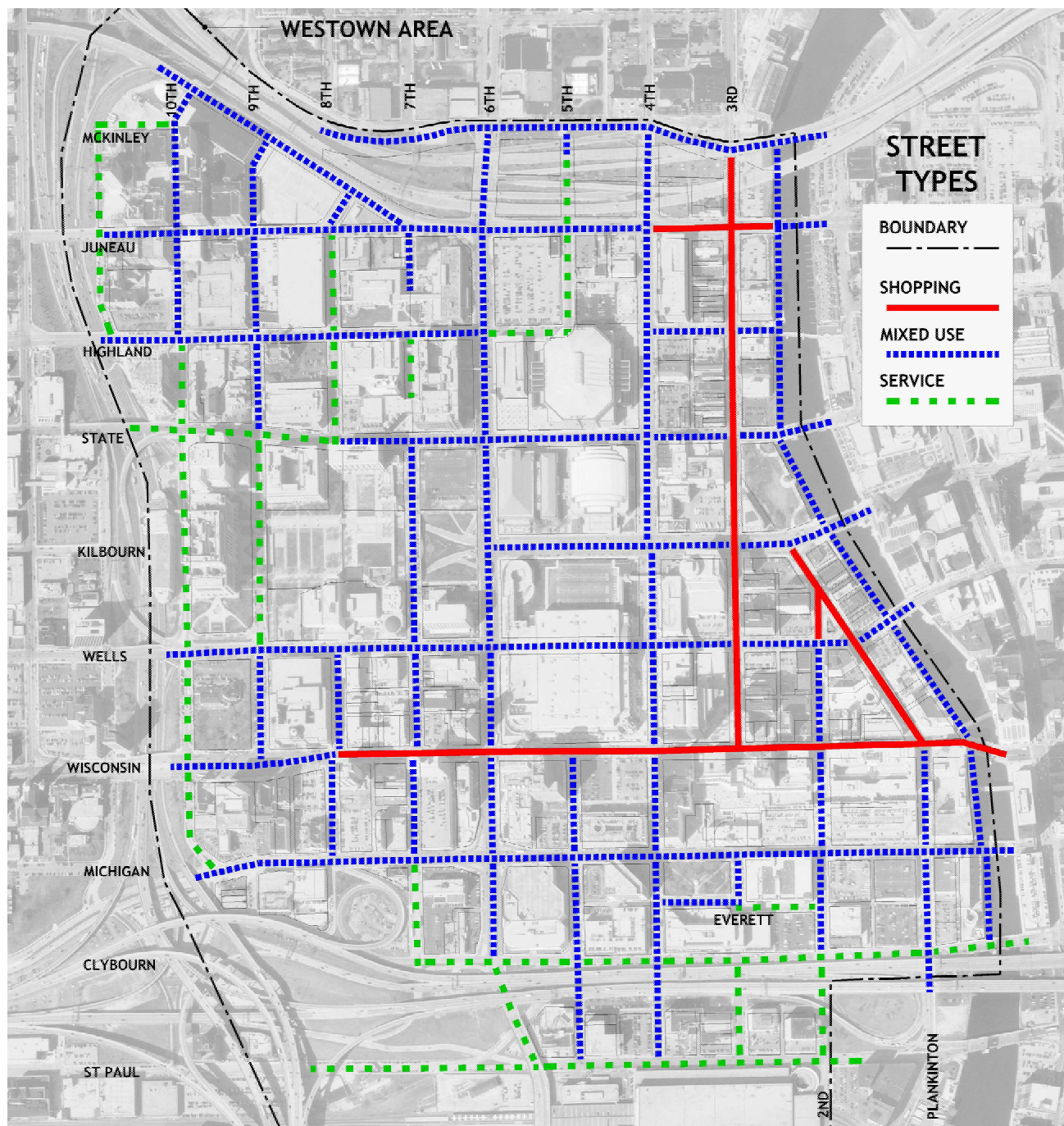
STREET TYPES

Westtown covers an area roughly bounded on the north by McKinley Boulevard, the south by St Paul, the east by the Milwaukee River and the west by Interstate 43.

Within Westtown (as in other areas of the city), streets are the most significant public places and should be designed and enhanced to reflect this, however not

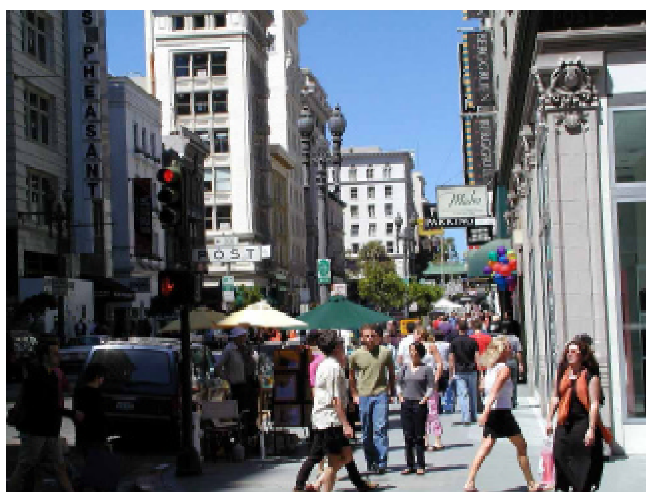
all streets have, nor should have, the same character.

Street Types are used to qualify the desired character for buildings and other developments along a corridor. The standards in this document are dependent upon the Street Type on which the proposed project is located. Guidelines are differentiated by Street



Type when appropriate. There are three Street Types with differing guidelines based on the amount of pedestrian activity desired. The Street Types include: Shopping, Mixed-Use and Service Streets.

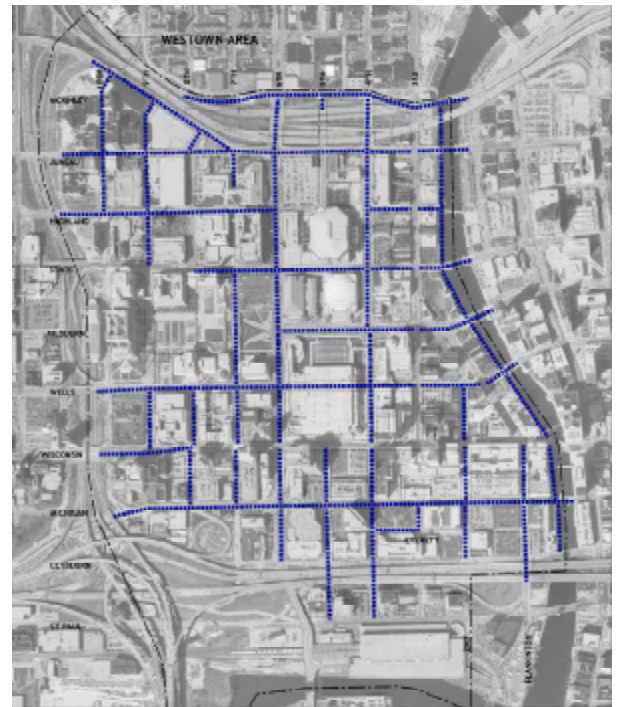
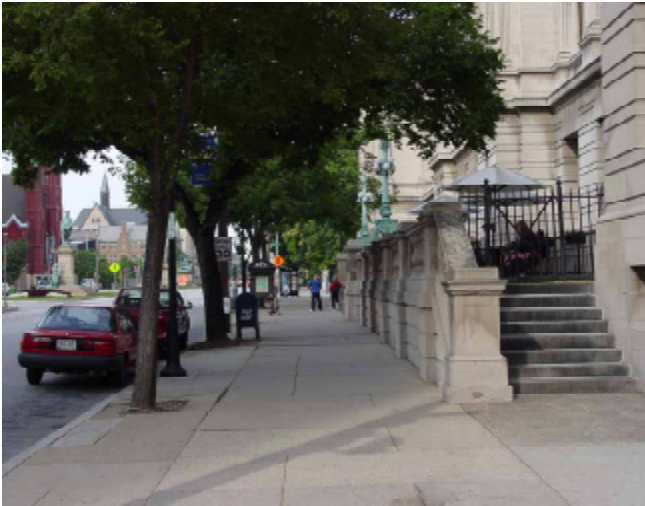
For any project, the Street Types must be first determined as it affects the specific standards. The map on the left shows the Street Types within Westtown and is intended to reflect future conditions.



Shopping Streets: These are vibrant places with high levels of pedestrian activity and visual interest. They are destination places with active storefronts accessible to the public such as shopping, personal services and entertainment at the ground level.

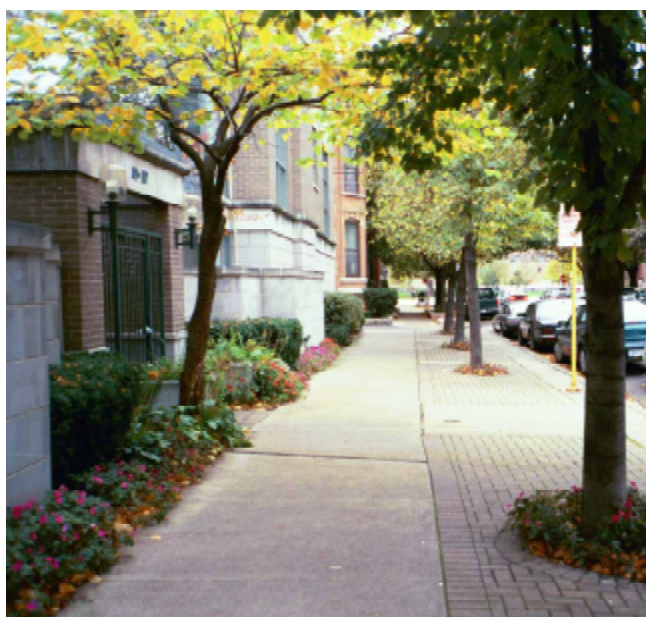
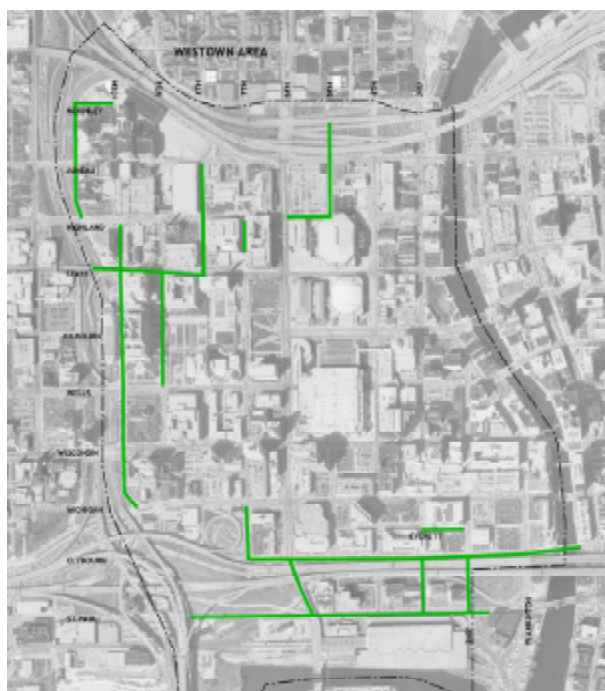


STREET TYPES



Mixed Use Streets: These are vibrant places with high levels of pedestrian activity and visual interest. They are places that promote a mix of ground floor uses such as offices, residential, institutional, as well as any use called for on Shopping Streets.

Service Streets: These are streets that accommodate a variety of service uses. While these streets may not have high volumes of pedestrian activity, they should provide design detail at a pedestrian scale.



WESTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINE ZONES

Because development and improved projects within Westown will significantly vary in scope from constructing a new sign and storefront modifications to constructing an entirely new building, the actual guidelines are organized into Zones. By doing so, an applicant who is considering a design change to the display windows and sign above the front door, for example, can find all of the pertinent guidelines in one section (Zone 1). On the other hand, an applicant considering the construction of a new infill building would need to be familiar with guidelines in all Zones (Zones 1-6).

The Zone diagram on the opposite page illustrates six zones of a building that relate to a building's facade where these guidelines apply.

Zones 1-3 (Base, Middle, Top) comprise the "Facade Zone". This zone is essentially the multi-layered elements of a building facing a street. Elements include doors and windows, stairs, signs, awnings, etc.



Zone 1 Facade Base - The base anchors the building to the ground and is the interface between the building and people. The base of the building isn't necessarily limited to a single story and includes any exposed basement.



Zone 2 Facade Middle - The middle of a building abstractly communicates the building's function or use. The transition between the middle and the base or the middle and the top of a building is often articulated by the use of contrasting materials, or ornamental elements.



Zone 3 Facade Top - The top terminates the building against the sky and provides opportunity to create an interesting silhouette and, in conjunction with surrounding buildings, an interesting skyline.



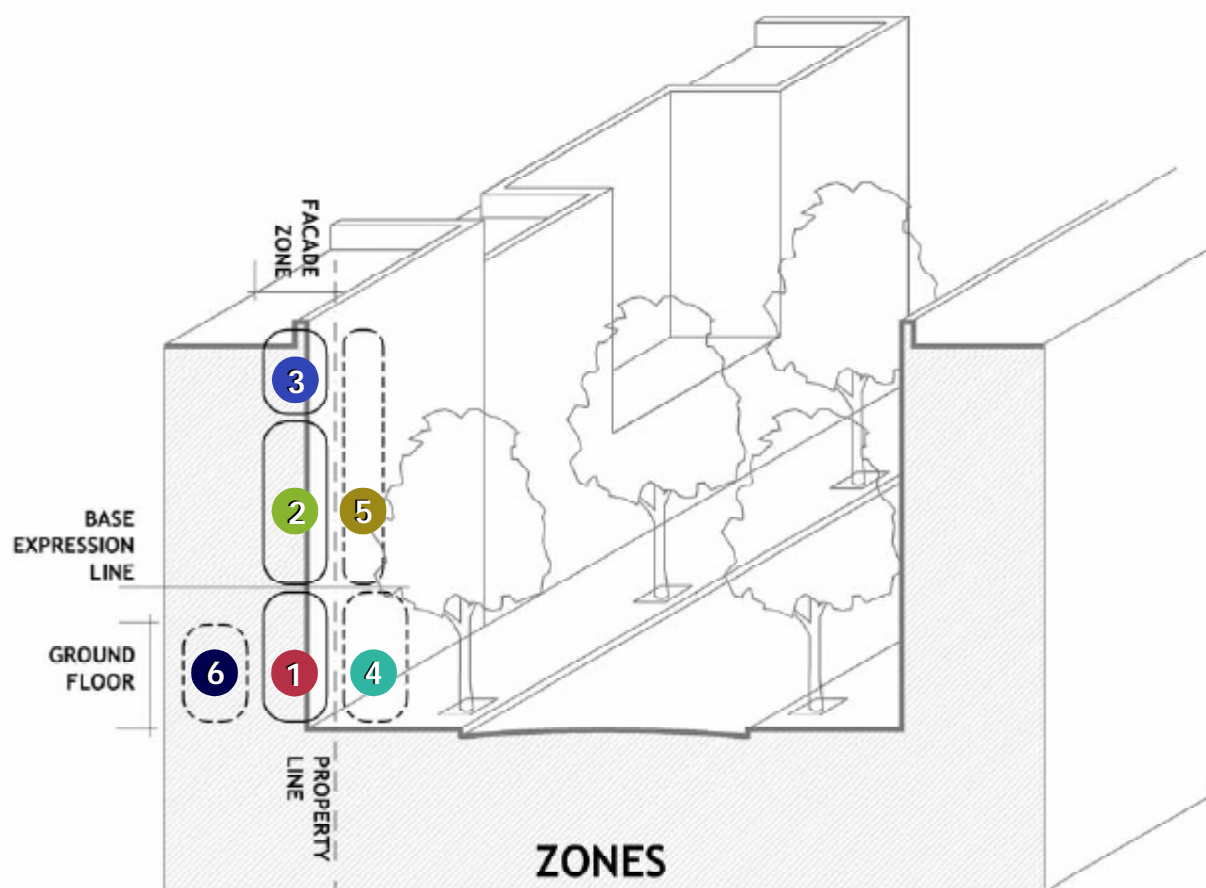
Zone 4 Facade Base Encroachments - Base encroachments include any element at the base of a building that extend beyond the property line. Elements in this zone may include architectural features, signage, awnings, lighting, etc.



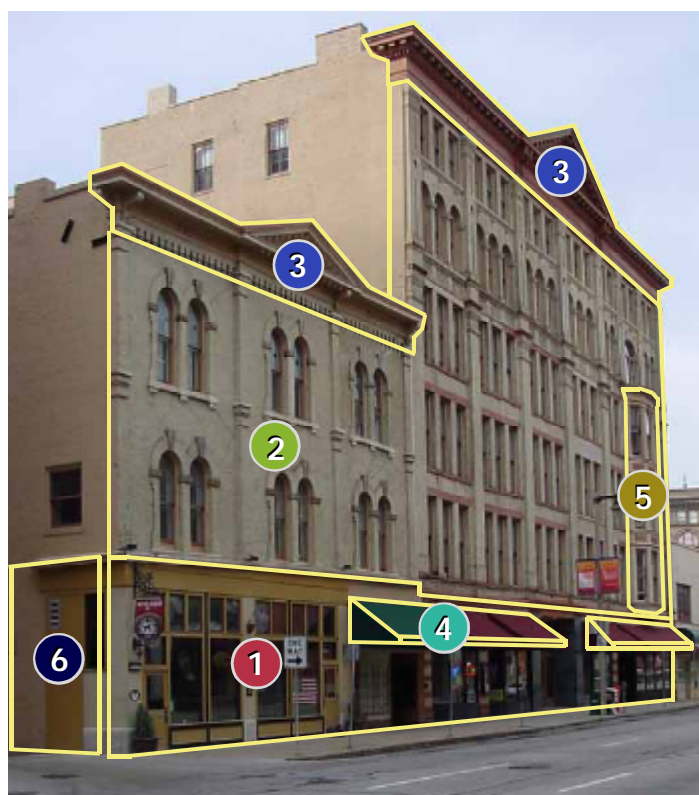
Zone 5 Facade Middle and Top Encroachments - Middle encroachments include any element above the base of a building that extends beyond the property line. Elements in this zone may include architectural features, bay windows, signage, balconies, etc.



Zone 6 Interior Activities - Interior activities include uses that occur on the private side of a building's facade on the ground floor. For the purpose of these guidelines the depth of this zone is defined as 12 feet. The importance of providing guidelines for this zone is to ensure a certain amount of activity on the ground floor to enliven the street.



- 1 FACADE BASE
- 2 FACADE MIDDLE
- 3 FACADE TOP
- 4 FACADE BASE ENCROACHMENTS
- 5 FACADE MIDDLE & TOP ENCROACHMENTS
- 6 INTERIOR ACTIVITIES



RESOURCES

Development Center, Department of City Development

The Development Center is the single point of contact for permits to construct, remodel and occupy buildings in the city of Milwaukee. Development Center staff members review building plans to ensure their compliance with the Milwaukee building code, the State of Wisconsin building code, and the City of Milwaukee zoning code.

Contact: Development Center Hotline
414.286.8211
www.mkedcd.org/build

Milwaukee Downtown BID #21

120 square blocks, representing approximately 400 commercial properties make up the Milwaukee Downtown Business Improvement District #21, known as Milwaukee Downtown. Commercial property owners agree to assess themselves to fund the following programs: Public Service Ambassadors, Clean Sweep, Graffiti Removal, Landscaping, streetscape improvements, Public Relations and advertising, Holiday Lights, Collaborative Marketing and business support and attraction.

Contact: Beth Nicols, Executive Director
414.220.4700
beth@milwaukee downtown.com
www.milwaukee downtown.com

Westown Association BID #5

The Westown Association, BID #5 promotes development of the western portion of downtown as a vibrant commercial area and as an exciting place to live, learn, work, and play. The Association membership representing the whole Westown district and the approximately 35 commercial property owners within

the 16 block BID fund marketing, special events, design guidelines, business support and attraction initiatives. Events include River Rhythms, Westown Farmer's Market, River Flicks and the Downtown St. Patrick's Day Parade.

Contact: Ellen Winters, Executive Director
414.276.6696
ellen@westown.org
www.westown.org
www.parkmilwaukee.com

Milwaukee RiverWalk District BID #15

The Milwaukee RiverWalk District (MRD) was created in 1992 to be a catalyst for development along the Milwaukee River. The Riverwalk extends from Pleasant Street on the north to Clybourn Street on the south. MRD presents RiverSplash, The Milwaukee River Challenge, RiverSculpture and supports many other river-related events.

Contact: Gary Grunau, Board Chairman
414.223.6901 x123
Marsha Sehler
414.271.8899

Historic Preservation Resources

The Historic Preservation Team can provide technical assistance related to building technology, history and design. Staff members also offer their assistance in competing for historical building research funds and Rehabilitation Tax Credits for a project.

Contact: Carlen Hatala
414.286.5722
chata@mkedcd.org

Facade Grant Program

The city-wide facade grant program provides grant dollars to improve the street-facing exterior of commercial buildings.

Contact: Rhonda Manuel
414.286.8201
rmanue@mkedcd.org

Capital Improvements Funds

The Department has access to CIP funds for improvements to the public way, such as lighting, landscaping or special paving in conjunction with significant private investment from a project as well as on a cost-sharing basis with other local property owners.

Contact: Rhonda Manuel
414.286.8201
rmanue@mkedcd.org

Commercial Inventory Program

An inventory of the commercial buildings has been created to help fill empty storefronts in neighborhood commercial districts. The inventory helps people better understand the existing business mix and what opportunities are available for further development.

Contact: Jenny Brown
jabrown@mkedcd.org
414.286.5921

Dimitri Jordan
414.286.5662
djorda@mkedcd.org

Bicycle Rack Program

A business owner or local employer can obtain a FREE bike rack from the City of Milwaukee's Department of Public Works. There are three styles and fifteen different colors to choose from. The City will drop off the rack. The recipient will be responsible for installation and maintenance of the bike rack. Download an application at www.mkedcd.org/business/busbike.html

Contact: Michael Loughran, P.E.
414.286.3667
mlough@mpw.net

Milwaukee Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) Capital Access Program (CAP)

CAP can provide access to financing for companies-especially start-ups and small business, which may not be able to obtain conventional financing. Loan size varies from \$1,000 to \$500,000. The lender structures the loan and makes the credit decision. The bank determines the reserve percent for each loan.

Contact: MEDC
414.286.5812
dlaton@mkedcd.org

Milwaukee Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) Target Loan Program

MEDC lends up to 40% of the project cost, but no more than \$300,000. The borrower must provide equity of at least 10% of the project costs. Eligible projects, including those ranging in size from \$50,000 to \$1,000,000. The following project costs may be financed: Buying land or a building; Constructing, remodeling or expanding a building; Machinery and equipment; Leasehold improvements; Working capital.

Contact: MEDC
414.286.5812
dlaton@mkedcd.org

Milwaukee Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) Second Mortgage Program

MEDC will finance 25-40% up to \$500,000. Eligible uses include building construction, real estate purchase, and equipment purchase. Projects totaling \$50,000 to \$2,000,000 are best suited. A minimum 10% down payment is required. Only fixed asset projects are eligible for financing.

Contact: MEDC
414.286.5812
dlaton@mkedcd.org

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) 504 Loan Program

The SBA 504 Loan Program is for acquiring long-term fixed assets, such as land, buildings, machinery and equipment, or for building, modernizing, renovating or restoring facilities. The amount of the loan is limited to 40% of a project or \$750,000 (up to \$1 million in some cases) whichever is less. For every \$35,000 of debenture financing in the CDC's portfolio, the SBA requires that an average of one job be created or retained within two years of the project's financing. To be eligible, a small business must be a for-profit corporation, limited liability company, partnership or proprietorship with a net worth (including any affiliates) of \$6 million or less.

Contact: answerdesk@sba.gov
1.800.U ASK SBA

For WI branch, look under "U.S. Government" in telephone directory.